



Spring 1992

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C A N O N



Yet how
infinitely
more grand
is He who
soared through
Death's Shroud

SPRING 1992



CANON

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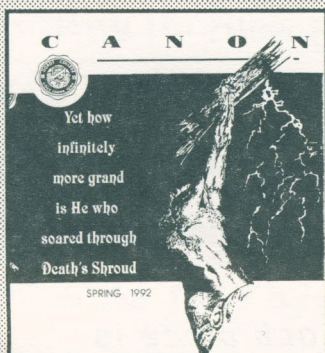
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ON THE COVER:
A visual interpretation of Tim Antonides' winning poem **Ascent** by sophomore art major Ben Meyer.

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From the Editors

In your hands you are holding the 1991-1992 *CANON*, the Dordt College student literary magazine. We hope you enjoy it.

Following tradition, this issue is comprised mostly of the winning stories, essays, and poetry submitted in February to the Martin Seven Writing Contest. However, other literary material is included as well. And, throughout the pages, you will find drawings and photos of student art work.

Variety is the key word to the 1991-1992 *CANON*. Each piece is written from a unique perspective, and with a distinct intention. Perhaps the enjoyment you receive from the *CANON* is largely dependent on your ability to discern between the voice or spirit behind each piece. This *CANON* is packed with different reflections, reflections coming from students like yourself, students who wanted, or needed, to express that special something that art can bring across. We suppose the need to express that something is a part of our humanity, as ambiguous as it always will be.

We would like to thank a few specific people for helping out with the production of this year's *CANON*: Brenda Van Hal, for her tireless, masterful work with layout and design, and general advice, Carol Peterson, for taking photos, Bart Miles, Bruce Medema, Carol Peterson, Ben Meyer, and Vanessa Bartels for developing photos, and Ben Meyer again, for his creative eye in designing the cover.

Then, of course, there's the Schaaps. Thanks to Mrs. Barbara K. Schaap, Director of Grants and Scholarships, for advising us to avoid severe profanity and explicit sexual scenes, references, and innuendos. Last, but not least, we would like to thank Dr. James Schaap for agonizing over each and every word that became this year's *CANON*.

Christine van Belle, Editor
Dirk Schouten, Editor

Ascent

I watched you waiting this morning
Cutting through a pool of foaming froth
How dark silhouette glided
Gills pumping like pistons
Sizing up the task. Mustering resolve.
Then the first approach and leap
Brindled tail beating brittle air.
Soar, streak, stretch, and slap
Shimmering silver belly on the gushing torrent.
A quick recovery, then back up
Blazing, bold, brazen
Hammering through whitened water walls.
A final twist to the top
Then Triumph.
Yet how infinitely more grand
Is He who soared through Death's shroud.
How His matchless lips
Sipped the vinegar
Then cried out the Triumph call
That split a curtain wide
And turned weeping
Into song.

*Tim Antonides, Senior
English
Poetry Category
First Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing
Contest*

How I Became a Baseball Fanatic

I think that I discovered baseball by chance. The summer after sixth grade my brother and I played baseball a lot, but I never watched professional baseball. One sleepy summer evening, after swimming at my friend's house until nine o'clock, I turned on the television, and for lack of anything better to do,

watched the Cubs lose to the Cardinals. But, I was hooked. I watched the next game, and the next.

I had become a baseball fan, or *fanatic*, which my Mom said was what fan was really short for. But I didn't care.

These players could probably hit the ball over the neighbor's house and break Markie's window on the next block. I was impressed. But why did I have to pick that summer, '85, the year that the Cubs pitching got more ailments than an entire intensive care unit? Then again, I had not been spoiled by '84, the year that they came so close to the pennant, and missed it. Little did I know, the Cubs had not won a pennant for over seventy-five years. They had come close so many heartbreaking times that most

fans will probably keel over in disbelief if they ever win the World Series again.

I was also a White Sox fan, one of the strangest things that anyone living in Chicago could do. If you were a Cubs fan you were supposed to hate the White Sox, and if you were a White Sox fan you thought that Cubs fans were all a bunch

of stuck up North Side snobs. Oh well, I didn't live in Chicago, and I followed my own rules. If the Cubs ever play the White Sox in the World Series, (about as likely as my brother agreeing with me) I'd root for the Cubs; they'd need



all of the help they could get.

The next summer, towards the end of August, my father and I went to our first major league baseball game. The White Sox were playing the Toronto Blue Jays. We packed everything we could possibly need for a game: blankets, sweatshirts, a thermos of hot chocolate, peanuts, popcorn, and baseball gloves, in case, in a dreamlike moment, we would do the magical—catch a fly ball.

When we arrived, we saw hints that

baseball too, was subject to capitalism. Beginning about a mile from the ballpark, men waved signs and yelled, "Park here, only five dollars. White Sox Parking, right here. Only five bucks." The closer you got to the park, the more expensive the parking got. The parking lot right next to the park cost twelve-fifty. I wondered where the players parked and whether they all drove Ferraris and Mercedes.

Typical of my father, we ended up parking along the curb about a mile from the ballpark. About a block from the ballpark we began to hear the low thrum of the crowd, and then we finally saw it--Comiskey Park, radiantly white, and in its own strange way, beautiful. It glowed with dreams and past glory and present hopes. We walked up to the ticket taker, who checked all of our supplies, and then told us that our thermos of hot chocolate was not allowed into the ballpark. We trudged back to a deserted lot a couple of blocks back, and drank the cocoa. Before returning to the Park, typical of my father, we hid the thermos in a bush.

Fearful of missing any of the excitement, we race-walked back to the park and got through the gate to our seats in the upper deck, slightly to the left of home plate.

I watched my heroes become real people. They sweated and pushed, but I knew that if I saw one of them in something other than a baseball uniform, I would view him as another Joe Average, with a wife, two kids, and a dog named Duke.

Somehow, I figured, that wouldn't be bad. Baseball was *still* beautiful, and maybe even more so. An average-looking guy could manage to connect a rounded surface with a rounded object flying toward him at a speed for which you would get arrested for driving. Even Ty Cobb, the man with the best average, only got on base one of every three times.

There was something, too about the way that every player, or at least every good player, worked with the team.

Whenever a player caught a ball, he had a backup. Players sometimes had to make sacrifice bunts rather than swing at a sweet pitch. If a batter got hit by the opposing pitcher, usually his pitcher or his team would retaliate in some way.

The crowd was also a part of the show. Thirty thousand people watching, waiting, and cheering over little stuff like whether or not the blue bus would win the CTA bus race being held on the scoreboard. The few Blue Jay fans got yelled at every time that they cheered for the wrong team. Other than that, most people were in agreement.

The White Sox won. They seemed to do so quite often when we went to games. In five years and about twenty games, we saw the Sox lose maybe five games. We've decided that perhaps we're good luck or something, but we don't ever do much for the Cubs. They lose about half of the games that we go to, but that's not a surprise. Even so, the Cubs will always be my favorites. Maybe it's something about Wrigley field and afternoon baseball. The sun shines down, making the crowd as mellow as a cat stretched out in the sun. Those fans seem to realize that they're not there to see one team win, but rather, to see the game of baseball played, now like it was before.

Look for me fifty years from now. I'll be the silver-haired woman wearing a Cubs shirt and sitting in the same seat every game, waiting for that glorious someday when the pennant flaps in the wind blowing out of Wrigley field.

*Sara Vander Bosch, Freshman
Biology
Freshman Essay Category
Second Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing Contest*

P i c t u r e s

A few weeks ago, Mom and I were having dinner at a truck stop on the way home from Spokane, Washington. Mom had picked me up from Whitman University and was tired from driving the past six hours. The bags under her eyes seemed to sag to her chin. When the waitress brought the tab to our table, she placed it in front of me. I shoved it over to Mom.

"You gonna let your grandma pay the bill?" the waitress said.

I laughed.

Mom pursed her lips, half-way smiling and shook her head. She knew she looked old enough to be her own mother. If you didn't know her, you'd probably wonder why she didn't keep up her appearance. But the deep grooves at the corners of her eyes, and her jowls were earned. In a way, her wrinkles are a kind of strength. She never let me forget that her life wasn't easy compared to kids now-a-days. "Your dad and I started at Weyhauser the day we left high school just so we'd have something to begin a family of our own with," she'd say. She didn't mean it in a nagging way, or to make me feel guilty, but Mom wanted to make sure I realized how good I had it.

It's just Rosie, my sister, Mom and I. When I was three years old, my dad was killed at the 7-11 four blocks from our house. He had stopped there on the way home from the mill on the wharf, just as three guys were robbing the place. The burglars were running out just as Dad was heading in. They shot him in the neck. Mom was six months pregnant with Rosie.

It's hard for me to remember anything about him. But sometimes, late at night, when I'm lying alone in the dark, I think about him and I can almost feel his bristly face pressing into my cheek. The smell of fresh lumber sits on my nose. I wonder about him, if he's in heaven looking down at me—maybe he doesn't recognize me anymore.

Mom used to have a picture of him in a tiny silver frame on the night stand next to her bed. I would stare at that picture for hours, trying to feel a connection, like you do when you miss someone who was once part of your life. But I couldn't get choked

up. The only reason I ever cried about my dad was because I didn't have one, not because Sam Winters was dead.

I was thirteen-years-old when Mom told us about Bill. When I came home from school that day I walked past our second-hand oak table, opened the fridge and got out the milk. My breakfast dishes were still on the counter. I lugged the milk jug and my bowl and spoon over to the TV in the next room where Rosie was lying on the couch munching from a box of Cap'n Crunch. I sat on the floor. "Jem and the Holograms," our favorite show, was on. It was the only cartoon with kissing.

"Is this what you girls do every day?" a voice hollered from the doorway.

Surprised, we looked up.

"Mom what are you doing home so early?" Rosie asked.

"Yeah, why are you home?" I said.

Mom looked around the room as if trying to avoid whatever she had to tell us. Her overcoat was wrinkled under the bag hanging from her shoulder. "Okay girls, in the kitchen, I need to talk to you."

Rosie and I grabbed the cereal box and headed into the next room. Mom always lectured us about immoral television—we were young girls with a lot of potential. I didn't expect this time to be any different. She sat at the table and folded her hands on the oak surface. Rosie and I kept munching on our cereal, waiting for her to begin. The TV buzzed in the background and I wrapped my feet around the legs of the chair.

"I invited someone over for dinner tonight," Mom said.

I looked at Rosie and then back at Mom, her graying hair outlining her face. "Who?" I asked.

"It's Bill Meyers, who your dad used to work with. I just wanted to tell you—" Her voice broke off, she took a deep breath. "I just wanted to tell you that we've been spending some time together lately. And I want to spend more time with him. I want you girls to get to know him a little." She played with the ring on her finger, pulling it off and on.

It was quiet. We stared at the dull surface of the table.

"Are you going to marry him?" asked Rosie.

I looked at Mom and waited for her answer.

"I don't know, Rosie, honey. But I'd like you to get to know him better. Okay?" she said.

Rosie smiled. "Okay, Mom."

I shrugged my shoulders, grabbed my backpack off the floor, and headed upstairs to my bedroom. "Whatever," I said.

"Heide, we're eating at 5:30. Don't make me holler for you," Mom called after me.

My books spilled on the floor when I threw my bag down. I laid on my bed and crossed my hands behind my head. Unglowing, tiny stars stuck to my ceiling—dull and lifeless.

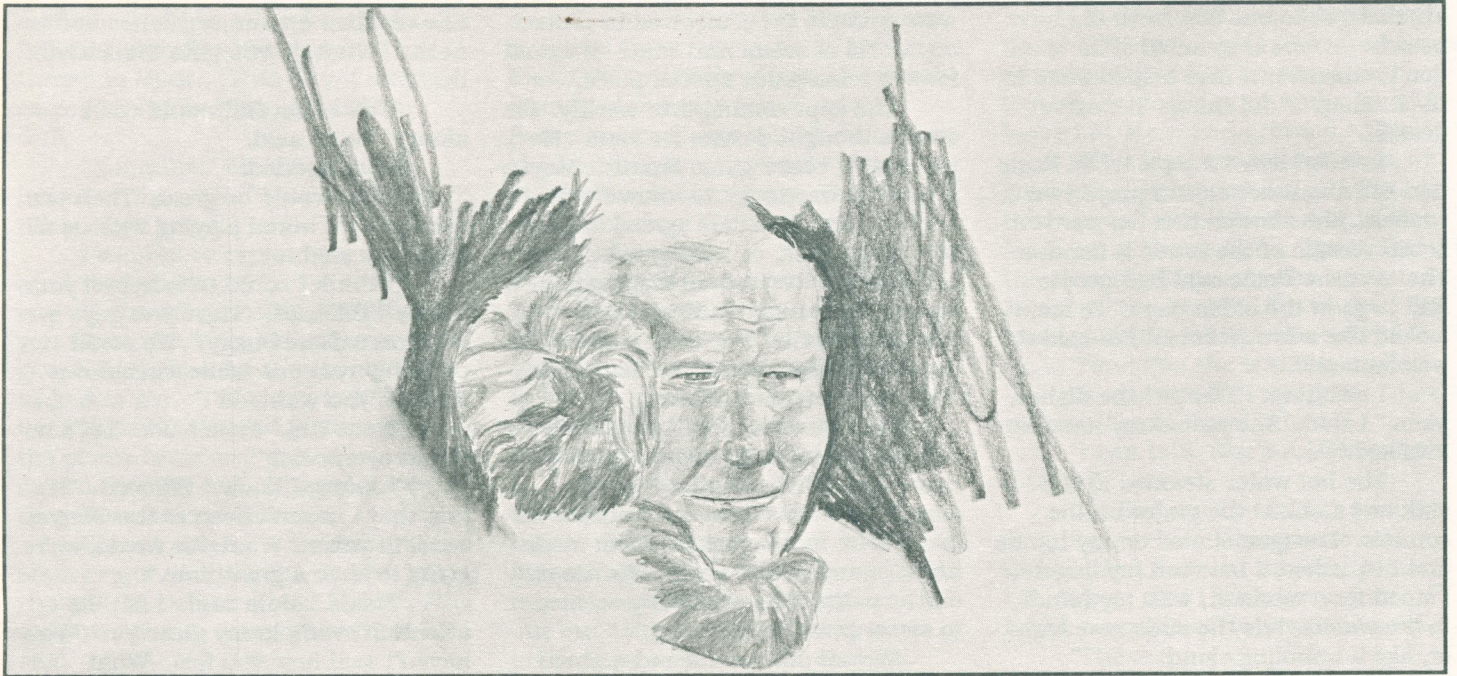
Bill. Bill Meyers.

I got off my bed and walked down the hall to Mom's room. The last time I had looked at Daddy's picture was a few months before school started. The door wasn't shut. I pushed it open and stepped into the room. The bed was made, the floor clean, and the blinds were up. The door to Mom's walk-in closet was wide open. Daddy's picture hung from a nail driven in on the inside of the door. His scruffy face smiled at me from across the room. I wondered if he minded being put in the closet. His picture looked better standing up than hanging from something.

I picked up the frame and laid on my stomach on the bed. Aunt Rose and Uncle Herman told me every time they saw me that I was the spitting image of my father. From the nose on up, the carbon copy of Dad. I stared into the picture. It was hard to think that eyes I can't remember are where my eyes come from.

There used to be a Kodak commercial on TV that showed a dad walking through a wheat field with a kid in overalls on his shoulder. The little boy was laughing. The dad had one hand on the kid's leg and the other was reaching up behind the kid's back, so he wouldn't fall. The sun was shining and the boy's hair was bouncing up and down as the dad walked along. The dad's lips were moving, but all you could hear was Pachabel's "Canon in D." He seemed the ideal dad.

I always thought of that commer-



artwork by Ben Meyer

cial when I looked at Dad's picture; it reminded me of what I thought I missed out on. It was hard not to confuse Sam Winters with the Kodak guy. I tried to feel loss—anger—because Sam Winter's wasn't around anymore. The Kodak man always popped up in my mind telling me who my dad should have been. When I looked at Sam Winters, I had no clue who he was. He was a faceless person who missed out on being my dad. The room was cold and I put the picture back. I shut Mom's bedroom door and went back down the hall.

Bill arrived at exactly 5:00. Mom told Rosie and Bill and I to chat in the living room while she finished making supper. It was the first time in my life that I didn't have to set the table.

Bill sat on the orange sofa across from Rosie and me. I was in the big easy chair, Rosie was on the floor. The black dashes in his shirt reminded me of the carpet in the basement. His balding head shined a bit underneath thin strands of black hair greased back. He sat forward and rested his elbows on his legs—his hands folded in the space in between his knees.

"Rosie, what grade are you in?" Bill said.

Rosie giggled and said, "Five."

"Oh," said Bill. "What about you, Heide—you must be at least 16."

"I'm in eighth grade."

We sat quietly for a moment. A neighbor's dog's barking sounded through the walls.

"I should probably help Mom with the dinner," I said. I got up from the chair and went into the kitchen.

Mom was pulling lasagna out of the oven. I reached up into the cupboard to get out the plates. Mom turned her head to me.

"Heide, what are you doing?" she whispered. "Get out there and talk with Bill."

"Mom, it's not nice to let you do all the work by yourself. Just let me set the table."

She smiled and cupped my cheek with her hand.

Methodically, I set four plates on the table. The fork and the knife on the left side, the spoon on the right with a paper napkin folded in a triangle under it. I never laid out the silverware the same, a trademark that always made Mom laugh. But this time, Mom switched the knife to the other side on every setting. "Not when we have company," she explained, and smiled as if to apologize.

I nodded and went to get the water pitcher. "Dinner's ready," Mom called. Bill and Rosie came in as I finished filling our glasses.

"Mom, Bill said he likes *Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel* as much as me," Rosie said. "He's going to read it to me after dinner." Smiling, Mom went to Bill and put her arm around him, her eyes shining at his

bearded face.

"Well, let's eat," she said.

A casserole dish of lasagna and a salad bowl of lettuce sat between Bill and me. He took quick bites during his anecdotes of life on the wharf. Rosie and Mom laughed like crazy. I busied myself with eating, pouring water and bringing food from the kitchen to the table. Whenever I sat down, Bill would pat me on the knee and ask polite questions about school or boys. Other than answering questions though, I didn't talk.

"Are you studying science in school, Rosie?" Bill asked.

Rosie nodded. "Every afternoon this week we got to go outside to catch bugs," she said, "I've got a jar with bug spray in it and they die in there."

I rolled my eyes.

When I brought out the French bread, Mom told me to sit down. Bill winked at me. "I don't bite," he said.

After dinner, Mom suggested that we eat dessert in the living room. I carried in the cherry pie Mom bought, and Rosie followed with the plates and silverware.

"Let me do the honors," Bill said. He knelt at the coffee table and cut up the pie. He put a slice on each plate and served each of us.

Mom beamed. "Bill, you're too much," she said.

I thought maybe he reminded her of Dad. But in his picture, Dad has lots of black hair and he was really tan. I didn't think he and Bill look

anything alike but they both did have beards. Maybe they acted alike. I don't remember if Dad helped Mom in the kitchen or did things like serve dessert.

I wolfed down my pie while Rosie told Bill about her school project on castles. She showed him her cardboard version of the tower of London. That's where Rosie said bad people had to go in the olden days. To me, it looked like a brown tube. Bill said it was fantastic.

I stood up. "I'll start the dishes, Mom," I said. She patted my hand as I walked by.

The hot water steamed in the sink as I stacked the plates on the counter. Lasagna slimed on my hands and I squished it between my fingers. I stood for a moment, with my hands in the water while the suds rose higher, like a bubbling cloud.

I heard Mom say I was always a bit shy at first.

During the first week in July, Rosie, Mom and I always camped along the Oregon coast. It was the summer tradition. We'd spend the most time at Honeyman State Park before going back up north. It was always the same — as soon as school got out, Rosie and I couldn't wait to leave. After coming back, we'd spend the rest of the summer nursing our sun-burned bodies and making jewelry from the shells we found at the beach.

We spent most of the vacation on the sand dunes. Huge and constant. The wind would sweep off the water and set the sand in motion, but the dunes never seemed to go anywhere.

Rosie and I would drag lawn chairs along with our beach bags, up the hills, and stake out a spot. Mom always stayed back at the camper. On top of the dune, the rest of the world faded away. We would run down the hot sand to the shoreline—not stopping until we reached the water. We laid flat on the wet mud, waves rolling in over our feet, each time creeping a bit higher. Mom would bring lunch to the top of the hill. Sand stuck to our wet legs, while we ate grainy sandwiches and the sun beat on us. Mom, Rosie, and I—on our own shifting sand castle.

I promised myself that camping this summer would be just as good as the summers before. Things seemed so up in the air lately about who we

were going to be. I resolved to protect our world of ocean and sand—it would forever remain our special place.

Bill kept coming over weekly. He always brought daisies for Mom. He was also a board-game fanatic. Maybe it was his way to get to know Rosie and I better. I politely agreed to play Monopoly, Risk, or whatever he'd bring, and we ended up playing games almost three nights a week. Bill would insist that I be the banker or let me choose the color of my man first—winking at me and grinning.

One Sunday, about two weeks before we were to go camping, Bill came over. There were no board games under his arm, but I suspected cards were in his pocket. Mom made hotdogs and potato salad. We ate out on the patio. The whole city seemed to sweat in its day off.

We sat around the red-stained picnic table on its matching benches. Dad made the set just before he died. Rosie and I sat on the bench that slanted slightly downward from the right side to the left. Mom said Dad accidentally made the legs different sizes. They never got around to fixing it. I pictured Mom and the Kodak man laughing together.

"My dad made this table," I said suddenly. Bill looked surprised.

"He did?" he said. "That's pretty good craftsmanship." He ran his hand along the edge of the table as if feeling for flaws.

"All except for that bench," Mom said, pointing to where we sat. "The legs aren't the same size so it sort of slopes. That's pretty bad for a guy who worked in a lumber mill, isn't it?" She shook her head. Bill laughed. Mom always told that joke when she talked about the table. To me, it always sounded like she was laughing at Dad.

"You girls looking forward to camping?" Bill said.

"It's going to be great. We got new salt-water sandals and beach towels." Rosie said, chomping on a celery stick.

I kept eating.

"I'm sure you'll have a great time," he said. Bill looked at Mom and rubbed her back. Seagulls squaked overhead. Mom's short hair barely moved in the breeze.

She smiled at us.

"I know it's sudden," she said. "But Bill and I were thinking it'd be fun for all four of us to go this year."

She reached up and scratched her neck. "What do you girls think about that?"

"You mean Bill would come along?" Rosie said.

Mom nodded.

"That would be great. Then you wouldn't get bored playing with us all day," she said.

"I think I could take her off your hands," Bill said. "Have you guys ever been on a dune buggy? We could probably rent one while we're down there, if you wanted."

"Now, Bill," Mom said. "Let's not go too overboard."

"I know, I know," Bill said. "It's just that I haven't been to the Oregon coast in years. Whatever we do, we're going to have a great time."

"Heide," Mom said. I felt the attention swing in my direction. "You haven't said how you feel. What would you think if Bill came along this year?"

My neck tensed and I put my hands under my legs. I looked at Mom again, expecting a reassuring look, but she just waited. I was being forced to talk—it was being squeezed out of me. I stared at the table. Mom, Bill, and Rosie were silent.

"I mind," I said finally.

It was quiet.

I looked up to see if they had heard me. All their eyes were on me. Something inside me was saying *get out of here*, but I ignored the voice.

"Heide," Mom said, but Bill touched her arm.

"It's okay," he said. "She was honest with us. We can't get angry at her for that." I crossed my arms in front of my chest and breathed in slowly, looking down the whole time. "Even if I didn't like it, I wanted to know," he said.

"Heide, I know this is hard for you..." Mom wasn't sure what to say. "But it doesn't have to be this way. I hope you know that."

The can of diet Coke was wet and cold against my palm. I watched the moisture drip on my hand.

"I just want you to know I would never hurt your mother," Bill said.

Rosie picked at her potato chips. "Heide, it's no big deal. We're at the beach all day, anyway," she said.

I didn't feel like talking. I just wanted to leave. Mom's face told me answers were needed.

"You and I don't know each other well, Heide. But, I love your

mother. And I love her family, too," Bill said. I still said nothing. He turned to Mom. "This didn't stay according to the plan, did it?" he said.

"Not quite," Mom said. She looked at me. "Don't you have anything more to say?"

I wanted to explain everything, but I said nothing.

"I should probably go. I'll call you tomorrow." He leaned over and gave Mom a kiss on the cheek. He looked at me. "I'm going to keep trying," he said. He got up, walked past the picnic table and patted my shoulder on the way out. I heard the front door close behind him.

We sat still for a moment, then Mom began to stack the dishes. "I'm trying to understand you Heide. Why are you fighting this so hard?" she said.

"I don't know Mom," I said. "Why do you have to ruin the way things are? I like us now." I crossed my arms. "Just forget it. I don't want to talk anymore."

"Rosie, help me clear off the table," Mom said. Her voice was scratchy. I could tell she was about to cry.

I walked across the patio and leaned on the railing. I heard Rosie tell Mom that Mrs. Higgins, her teacher, said that God saves everyone's tears in a giant gold bowl. I put my chest against the wood and hung my arms over the other side. Maybe I had broken Mom's dream, I thought. But I didn't want to forget Dad's picture. I wondered if I let Bill in, if someday, he would become a picture in the closet as well.

I went into the kitchen. "Mom, I didn't mean to make trouble," I said. I set my diet Coke on the counter. "I miss Dad, any dad. And I'm scared." I didn't know what else to say.

Mom leaned over the sink and opened to window above the faucet. She turned off the water. "I just want you to be happy for me. You're not losing anything by letting Bill become part of this family."

Bill didn't come with us that year. The sandy hills were waiting for us like the summer before. We spent endless days on the sand, playing on the dunes, and running down the water's edge. Mom bought us a kite and when the wind wasn't too strong, Rosie and I flew it out

over the water, jumping back every time the icy waves came in over our toes. On top of the dune, the beach stretched out into the distance. Sometimes a barge would drift along the horizon, and sailboats would come close to the shore. But the ocean constantly pulled the boats along their paths.

Every day of vacation, Mom gave Rosie and I a one-dollar allowance. We spent it at the snack shop near the campground entrance. In the corner of the store was a photo booth about three feet wide. For a dollar, you could get four pictures.

One afternoon, instead of ice cream, I told Rosie to climb in the booth. We rolled up stool as high as it would go. With Rosie on me, and me on the chair, we grinned, stuck out our tongues, looked sexy and picked our noses for the camera. When the machine spitted our pictures, I held on to them and told Rosie we would divide them up when we got home.

In the camper after the sun went down, Mom and I had a ritual of playing Gin after Rosie went to sleep. Two days before we had to go home, Rosie got a bright red sunburn. That night she lay sleeping in her underwear with the covers off her. The only light was the lantern on the table. Mom was dealing me another hand. I had won the last five rounds. Her tanned face looked healthy.

"Let's never get too busy to do this, okay?" she said.

I smiled.

The ocean rolled and tossed, the sound distanced by the dunes between us and the beach.

"Even if it's more than the three of us," she said. I arranged the cards in my hand. Mom straightened what was left of the deck. "Sometimes, when you girls are down on the beach and I'm at the top of the sand dune watching you, I really miss your dad. We used to come here just after you were born." She reached out and put my hair behind my ear. "He loved you very much."

I could feel my eyes getting hot.

"Give Bill a chance," she said.

"He's got a lot of love to give you. Even if you only knew him for a short time, you wouldn't regret it."

Salty tears stung my sunburned cheeks. "Promise?" I said.

"Promise."

I nodded and wiped my runny nose. "I'll try." I said. I looked down at my hand. I had an Ace, King, Queen of Spades, and four nines. I looked at Mom and grinned. "Gin."

Bill was at the house when we got back. He helped unload the station wagon while Mom brought the food out of the camper. Rosie carried the sleeping bags into the house and I went to the back of the wagon. Bill was trying to unhitch the camper.

"How was the trip?" he asked.

"It was good," I told him. "Rosie got sun-burned pretty bad."

"I can tell. She's a lobster," He laughed.

I pulled out the folded pictures from my pocket. Three were still attached. I had cut the fourth one off. "Rosie and I took these in a booth a couple of days ago." I said.

"These are great," he said.

"You can have one if you want." I held out the one I had cut off.

Bill smiled. "Thank you."

"Sure," I said. I grabbed my duffle bag full of seashells and headed into the house.

Mom and Bill have been married for almost six years now. Usually they both pick me up from college, but Bill was working overtime so he and Mom could go to Hawaii in the fall.

I haven't looked at Dad's picture in a long time. But sometimes, late at night, when I'm lying alone in the dark, I think about that piney smell and his scruffy cheek. There are times when I don't care as much, even times when I think about him without any real feeling. His memory comes in different shapes, but it still comes around.

Some things change, I guess.
Some things don't.

Christine van Belle, Senior
English
Fiction Category
Second Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing
Contest

[I sit and wonder]

I sit and wonder
amid the thunder
of the fireworks of today
where do I belong and where will I stay?

I'm not American
but I am.

I'm Peruvian

but I'm not

I'm knot.

I know not what I am,

American or Peruvian.

I remember:

We are strangers, we are aliens,
we are not of this world.

—July 4, 1988

*Sam Gesch, Senior
English/Spanish*

P R I V A C Y

Privacy
is nonexistent in
college cramped housing
where every spare space
is completely crammed with at least
six sweating souls
who are larger than the confinement
allows
and are trying to be themselves
but become clones of
the other five forms
clustered chaotically
in their authentically personal aura
now exposed to
publicity.

*Chrissy Struyk, Senior
English*

Two-Second road trip

widening eyes
headlights flash
crunching metal
forward thrust

Of pain.

body slam
flood of blood
mob

Of strangers.

forehead gash
coherent brain

Trapped inside.

sacred scream
not a dream
engine sigh
pounding cry

tearful sob
surrounding

teeth gnash
with a train

*Brenda J. Van Hal, Senior
English*

E X I T

**"Why is light given to those in misery, and life to the bitter of soul,
to those who long for death that does not come?"
Job 3:20-21**

**As a child, Steve
I watched your stinging eyes glisten
As we played in the sandbox
Your eyebrows knitted in pain
Slapped by your father's gin-soaked bitchings.
Your heavy eyelids, bags bulging
Told of the long, sleepless nights
Listening to the shrieking squabbling
That invaded from upstairs.
Why did I see your pain
And not see how its breath poised over your candle's wick?**

**"Underachiever," "rebel," "delinquent," they called you at 17
And I would nod as I saw the floor of your Mustang
Covered with aluminum cans of beer and glass flasks of bourbon
As joints and seeds spilled over in the ashtray.
I could not see how the vice tightened around you
Crushing your dreams, your youth
And driving you into the hills that day
Where pain finally left your misery-sick brain
Halted by cold lead.**

*Tim Antonides, Senior
English*

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One night in November, my mother pauses from carrying the dishes into the kitchen, struggles with the thought for a moment, turns to my father and says, "Guess what I heard the other day at Ladies' Society. Case Timmermans died a few days ago. Case Timmermans. Wasn't that the man Frida married?"

My father looks straight ahead, at neither of us, and frowns a bit. Then he nods his head, turns his attention to his dessert, and says no more.

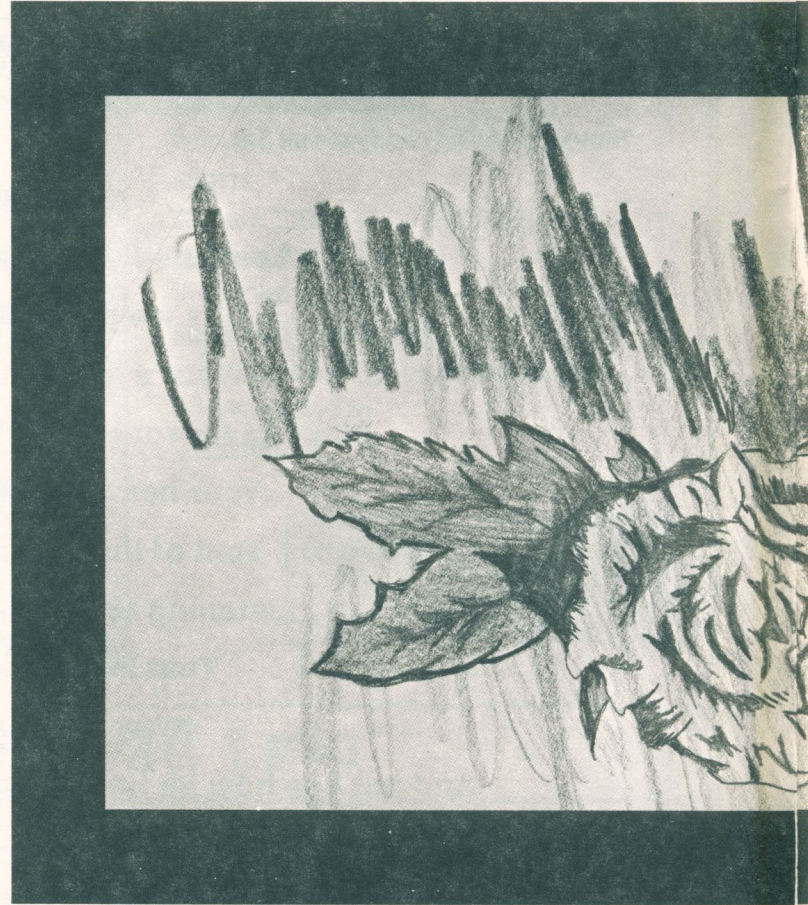
But this sudden news, and my father's reaction, surprises me. My father emigrated from the Netherlands in 1946 and dated Frida for eight years. Eight years. Van Rooyen was her maiden name. Years ago, he would sit on the edge of the my bed, attempting, I know now, to explain the nature of love and sex. He would start relaxed and confident, but when he saw me lying there, wide-eyed, mesmerized, he could never continue. So the shocking truth would turn to informal narratives about his own adventures as a young man. And all I ever got out of those father-son talks

were general stories of a young man, a young woman named Frida, and a situation which didn't work out.

Sometimes he told stories of the past, always in that same familiar tone of voice—steady, well-pronounced and embedded with a sly sort of pride. At least that's the way I took them, as if the histories of those mid-century Dutch immigrants were a collection of hallowed tales only to be spoken with respect and dignity.

We finish devotions and rise from the table. My father strolls towards the couch and his newspaper. I head upstairs for an old pair of jeans and a t-shirt. I am an only child. With my father's failing health, it is up to me to check the greenhouses each night after we eat. I'm not great mechanically, only good enough to notice the problems. If anything is irregular, my father fixes it. Still, like he says, I've got two eyes to see and two ears to hear. Six evenings a week, unless I'm gone, I check the houses. Regardless. The eleventh commandment.

Some friends say I should try something different. Working for my father, they say, is a hindrance. Some even



artwork by Ben Meyer

call me lazy. We've been out of high school six years and two of them are greenhouse managers making twice the salary I do. Still, I'm content living at home. Room and board, plus a weekly paycheck that goes straight to the bank.

I change and walk downstairs. When I pass him in the living room, he reminds me to check the lights in the last house where the poinsettias are growing. He is still standing, as if

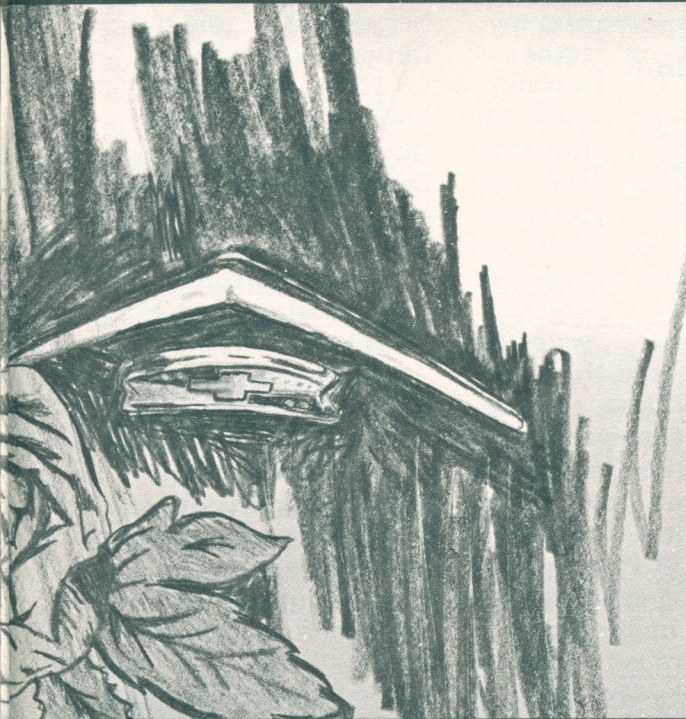
to show his authority in the matter, the paper still folded in his hand.

"Don't forget to lock the screen doors in the last house," he says.

"I won't," I say.

I watch him as he turns from me and sits down. He seems to age in the process. His eyes are still the same—blue and alert. He has always been short, but in sitting his body seems to fold together. His shoulders, chest, and protruding midsection bunch together—an avalanche

r a n c e



of flesh. Sitting down, his head dips in between his shoulders. He fits his reading glasses on, sighs deeply, and pulls open the paper.

I put on my jacket and step outside. The temperature has dropped sharply and the sun is sinking. This is the time between day and night when everything takes in dull, gray tones—the cars in the parking lot, the grass, and the trees. Above, dark clouds race as if headed towards a specific destiny.

Dad says that

autumn has an authority to it. It closes the beaches, shortens the days, and forces us inside to wait for winter. There was no Indian summer this year and the cold is what my mother calls *akelig*, a Dutch word for disturbing or uninviting. My father has also noticed the strong winds and cloudy days. Although he hasn't mentioned it yet, I know he worries about the boilers and the strength of the glass. The snow is coming.

I walk across the lawn towards the huge cement building we call the "barn." It is actually a huge, square concrete warehouse.

Facing the house is the entrance—two sliding glass doors. There's enough room for three transport trucks to park inside the squared area. In the middle of one cement wall is the entrance to the cooler. During the day, if there are no trucks parked inside, the cut plants are wheeled into the loading area and sorted. After the sorting, the cooler's steel belted door is opened and the flowers are wheeled in. Against the other wall, opposite the entrance, are two sliding doors which lead to a boiler room and my father's workshop, a small, filthy room I was never allowed to enter as a child, but did anyway. In the middle of the last wall is another sliding glass door that leads to the greenhouses.

I pick up three light bulbs in the supply room and study the computer reading in the main office. I check the temperature reading on a small monitor before entering the cooler. Inside, the smell of spider mums and long-stem chrysanthemums is almost overwhelming.

Chrysanthemums sell well before wedding receptions and the like. They're cheap and easy to handle. But at Christmas, the public snubs them. While still in the ground their odor isn't strong, but in the cooler the cold seems to freeze the smell in midair. Every afternoon, the workers read the list of orders that have to be ready for the next morning, and cut the exact amount. Tonight, the orders are ready, rows of white pails with our business name written in black marker on the pails, twelve bunches of cut plants bundled together in each one. The floor has recently been hosed down. As I leave, I notice something odd. A clanging is coming from one of the fans—a piece of metal or perhaps a loose screw. I make a note of it.

I leave the cooler and lock the door. I walk across the cement floor, slide open the glass door, and walk into the greenhouses. The heat and humidity surround me. I start walking towards the last house, three hundred feet away.

Frida Van Rooyen. I've often wondered who Frida Van Rooyen was, as if her existence now is somehow less relevant

to what it was years ago. That she dated or spent a good deal of time with my father is all I know, but my imagination never stops here. I've done my share of dreaming who this character was, and how they were together.

Actually, it's my mother who keeps up her memory. Years ago she teased him occasionally about Frida, especially when she got, well, friendly. Right in the living room. Dad resisted her arms pushing her off with gentle force. He would keep his eyes on the newspaper and tell her, in Dutch, to lay off, but never without trying to stifle a smile.

"Oh, what's the matter?" she would say, and the game continued, "Are you still thinking about Frida?" a mischievous look on her face.

He always played along and, in Dutch, would say something like, "Who? Frida? Oh, that fat thing?"

Fat was far from the truth. When I was a boy, I spent rainy days inside with my lego sets and stuffed animals. I'd check out father's encyclopedias and my favorite topics: the Canadian Prime Ministers, ancient Egyptian history, and sharks. Once bored, I would walk over to an oak cabinet beside my father's chair and begin paging through photo albums. And Frida, in the few pictures I saw of them together, was never fat. There were

three pictures of them together and each one convinced me that at one time in his life my father was wild and eccentric. Together on a beach, my father broad and dark, Frida hiding behind him, peeking around his back. There's one of them sitting on a rock at the edge of the Niagara River, the Falls a thousand yards behind them.

And my favorite photo: Dad behind his '51 Chevy convertible, leaning against it, his hands on his hips and a cigarette in his mouth, grinning as if he had been caught with his pants down and felt no embarrassment. In the background is nothing but flat land, the photo's black and white doing an injustice to the landscape. Or was it really that way? Frida is in the passenger seat, the wind playing with her hair, waving as if they were moments away from the start of a fantastic journey.

Fantastic journey? Certainly not. Where would they have gone in that Canadian wilderness of the fifties? Knowing they were isolated always sparked questions in my mind. And knowing that they were recent immigrants made me wonder how close they became. When the king of

France asked the explorer if the settlers would become irritated at each other for living so close, Champlain answered, "They have no choice but to bond." I agree. Isolation must lead to congregation.

They had spent eight years of their lives together—off and on

"Every day on his mind. Every day on hers. To me, just as interesting as wondering what happened. . . ."

and my father put it—sure, but they still had spent them together. Eight years. I

wonder about this decade of time, and the changes that were bound to occur during those years. Every day on his mind. Every day on her's. To me, just as interesting as wondering what happened in eight years is the fact that eight years did happen. And now with Case Timmerman's death, I wonder how far my father is removed from those years.

A string of lights hang over every row in the last house. Poinsettias don't need extra light, but my father has his own superstitions. When we first grew the plant, their color turned out weak. I blamed it on weak chemicals. My father blamed it on a poor lighting. This year, a lot of our Christmas profit is riding on how well the poinsettias sell. We packed six houses with over twenty-thousand plants this year.

From the center walk, I see that two light bulbs in the back are burned out. I pull the new bulbs from my pocket as I walk down the aisle.

Where did the two of them fall apart?

I stop at the nearest dead bulb.

What ever happened between Case and my father?

I lean over, reach forward, and grab the thick wire cable. I begin twisting off the old one.

How did it end?

I unscrew the old bulb, twisting gently, glass in my hand.

What was he thinking when he heard Case Timmermans had died?

I twist the bulb harder now, fed up because I've realized my own desire to know more about a time that my father never spoke about. Frustration sets. I keep twisting and twisting until I hear only the electrical buzz of burning lights.

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Summer. There has been not rain in weeks, and the dust pours out behind them in huge clouds. The Chevy convertible spins around a corner and rolls onto Victoria Road, a highway leading straight towards the lake. He holds his foot steady, feels the engine give in, and drops the pedal to the floor. He's heard rumors of unfaithfulness and tonight he wants answers. Tonight, his car and cigarettes are his only friends. The Chevy climbs to eighty

and the speed scares the young woman.

He slows down but they don't speak. Five minutes later, they approach the lake. He parks the car in a culvert on a dirt road, a hundred yards from the lake. He shuts off the ignition, leans over the steering wheel, and faces her. She avoids contact with his eyes, keeping her eyes fixed on the lake. He coughs, waits, and sighs. A border he must cross. The complexity of beginning.

"I think there's something you have to tell me," he says, "so why don't you just do it?"

She remains facing away because she's crying.

"All right," he says, "you don't have to talk. But you have to answer a few questions."

She nods her head.

The whole past week there has been something stirring inside him like an unsettled liquid. He asks her about Timmermans and if the rumors are true and about their future. He waits. He knows that for a few moments he won't be able to speak.

Her answers do more than surprise him. They take that unsettled liquid and heat it until it boils over the edge, and begins to burn.

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The socket connects with the silicon and a flash of light jars me. I walk down the row, replace the other light, and leave in a hurry.

.....

Saturday evening, Jerry and I are driving

back after delivering a hundred boxes of poinsettias to Toronto. Snow has been falling since the morning and the traffic has bundled close together and slowed considerably. The heating has broken down in the cab and we're behind schedule. The radio DJ says that a storm is coming from the south. Jerry groans.

"What a pain in the ass. What a pain in the ass," he says from the passenger seat, watching the snow hit the windshield, "And, . . . and you know what? Isaac was a real idiot back there. I mean, we walk in with his

plants and the first thing he says is 'What took you guys so

long?' I felt like stuffing a pot down his throat. While you were in the head office signing the transferral sheet, he gives me crap about being late. And then he's asking all kinds of questions about your dad. You know, like, 'Where's Joe?', 'What the hell happened to Joe?', and 'Why ain't Joe delivering today?' You know, I'll bet Isaac's only half my size, and I'm sitting there taking his crap."

My father calls Jerry a friendly giant. Most of the time he's exactly that. At six-four, 240 pounds, with coke-bottle glasses

and a scruffy beard, he simply looks too stupid to defend himself. If he's ever late with a delivery, no one backs down from telling him. He's probably been a scape goat all of his life, and he knows it. After a while, his aches and pains become a bother. I try to ignore him and concentrate on the road and lights only a few feet in front of the truck. I can't see past the continual pounding of snow.

I'm confused. My father would have made the deliveries today. Isaac and he have done business together for years—

"Timmermans had had a reputation as a slick businessman, a real charmer."

probably came over the ocean around the same time.

Yesterday evening, he said he had to go somewhere today, and he asked me to make the deliveries. When I asked what was up, he said he had some other business. The lie was obvious, and we dropped the conversation.

Then yesterday afternoon, while tying bundles of flowers, I talked to him about Case Timmermans. Timmermans owned a huge retailing business somewhere north of Toronto, too far for us to do business with. My dad said Timmermans had had a reputation as a slick businessman, a real

charmer. Either you loved him or you hated him. Dad told me his unexpected death would cause a stir in the market.

"Maybe Frida will run the show from now on," I said, grinning.

"Oh, she could if she wanted. . . maybe even better than Case could," he said. He tied his last bundle and said he had to make a phone call.

The traffic slows to a crawl. The snow is coming down a bit harder. I wonder about our conversation yesterday. There doesn't seem to be a whole lot else to do as the traffic stops completely.

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He's about to slam the car door shut, but remembers that he wants to appear controlled. The sun has been merciless the last few days and the back of his Sunday shirt is soaked with sweat. Stay calm, he tells himself, and walks along the side of the house, his hands in his pockets.

Turning the corner, he walks into the backyard and sees Timmermans sitting on a wooden chair under a cherry tree, a glass in one hand, a book in the other. For a moment, he scolds himself—without a shirt, Timmermans is nothing to fear. What would be so attractive about him? His whole torso is white, and his chest is flat and level. His shoulder bones stick out. His hair is a mess, thin and black.

He reminds himself that he is four years older than Timmermans, and not to act this way. If a battle is in the making, he'll do his best not to lose control. He walks onto the grass, strolls towards Timmermans, and coughs lightly.

Timmermans looks up and stares for a few moments. He lays the book on the grass, and stands.

"It's too hot out today. . . .if you're going to ask me why I wasn't in church this morning."

"I'm not the preacher," he says.

"Well, for my sake, I'm glad you're not," Timmermans says, and forces a smile. "So how was it, Johan—how was church? I can see that you went."

"The same as usual," he says, and the sound of his voice gives him confidence.

"Well, that's the way it goes for us poor people, Johan," Timmermans says, grinning, "Not much changes."

Johan doesn't answer immediately. He waits a few seconds.

"Not much changes? I don't think I agree, Case. And I think you know that I don't agree. Right?" He realizes what he's said and he's impressed with the words he's chosen. "I think plenty has changed lately. Don't you?"

Right that moment, they hear a noise at the screen door. They both look over. Frida is

struggling with a tray full of fruit, crackers and sandwiches, and dishes. She looks up and sees Johan. The strength leaves her arms. She drops the entire tray. The sound of shattered glass hangs in the air.

"I really think you should leave, Johan," Timmermans says, picking up his shirt and the book off the grass. For the first time since his arrival, he sees Timmermans is scared. He watches how Timmermans doesn't dare take his

eyes off him while she slips is arms into the holes of his

shirt. His hands turn into fists. He turns and walks towards the front.

"Johan, Johan. Listen to me. I know you don't like this, I know you don't like this at all."

He doesn't listen. He storms towards the front of the house. He sees Frida at the screen door, terrified, but for one last time, he regards her. He'll see her again and again, but there is a difference between the seeing and regarding. And what he sees in her is something between deception and a lie. And he decides never to regard her again. . . .

.....
A half hour later, we hit the off-ramp

and drive up the service road. The surrounding fields are caked with snow, and the snow is still falling hard. We missed the brunt of the storm when we came around the corner of Lake Ontario in Hamilton and began heading east. Now, only a few miles from home, Jerry eases up a bit. He turns and faces me.

"You know, you're lucky. Your dad still pays you by the hour. When we get home, you get to quit."

I look over at him with caution. I don't understand what he means by still pays you by the hour, but I don't like the insinuation.

"What are you trying to say, Jer?"

"Well, shit. After I drop you off, I gotta deliver fifty boxes to Lakeside."

"You're going to Lakeside?"

"Yeah."

"Which plant—Niagara or St. Catherine's?"

"Both," he explodes, "I'll be a grandpa by the time I get done. Geez, you'll be asleep by the time I get back."

"Hey, screw you, Jer," I say. "You know after you leave, I still got stuff to do in the greenhouse."

"Like what?"

"Check the houses.

Turn off the lights. Lock up."

"Sounds pretty tough," he mutters, "You know, if I were you, I'd be right up there with your dad. I'd invest in the business. Crap, I wouldn't let my dad handle everything at sixty-five."

"Drop it," I say, and then I turn to him. "How can you say all that? You don't do anything but drive the truck."

"And what do you do, huh? When your dad was your age he already had his own greenhouses."

I turn away from him, and, out of anger, press the gas pedal down.

Jerry realizes what he's started and pulls back. "I'm just saying, you can't sit around and plant cuttings all day waiting till your dad hands everything over to you. . . right?"

We drive for a minute without speaking. Then I turn and look at him. "And that's what I ain't doing, is that it? I'm not pulling my weight? I'm just wasting time? You think..."

"Hey, man," he cuts in, pointing towards the windshield.

"Hey, what?" I answer, upset at the way he's been acting.

"Hey! Hey! Watch the road!" he yells, leaning far back in his seat. Just as I think he's simply trying to annoy me, I hear the sound of gravel underneath the van and I feel the van begin to shake. I look back just in time to see the front

end dropping over the ditch.

Neither one of us is hurt, and within a few minutes a farmer comes by and pulls us out. The front bumper is a bit dented, but we leave the issue.

We get home around six-thirty, and I help Jerry load the other van. Jerry slams the door and mumbles something as he heads for the driver's side. I walk towards the house.

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I take to heart what Jerry said. That my friends bug me is one thing, but to have Jerry Bowden telling me to grow up is another.

I start doing more for the business, and my father notices. After Christmas, he puts me in charge of all the geranium shipping and although my mother disapproves, starts talking business at the supper table.

Things don't change overnight. My progression into the business is slow. There is so much to learn. The more I learn, the more I realize I don't know. Along with my own set of keys, my father decided to give me my own office.

"How are you gonna do that—build another office?" I ask him.

"No. We don't have any room," he says. "But this summer you can have my old woodshop. You'll have to clean that mess out yourself if you really want it. And once you're done cleaning it out, we'll put in carpet, a desk, and a monitor."

I bought a John Deere

tractor without him knowing, and he isn't a bit upset when he finds out. Towards the end of January, he tells me that the doctor insists he only work half days. He says, grinning, that pretty soon he'll be the one checking the greenhouses after supper.

I can't exactly explain it, but there is still a tension between Jerry and me. He's aware of his role in the change in my behavior. He knows this is still a secret—what he said to me in the van. But I think the root of the problem is quite simple—he never got the opportunities I did.

In January, my dad and I attend three conferences held by the greenhouse operators association we're a part of. When we drive home, his mind full of familiar faces and names, even from years back, he smiles and talks about the way it was back then, when all of the emigrants were starting businesses with next to nothing. At one of these flower shows, where the big companies rent stands to promote their cause, I see the big TF sign for *Timmermans Flowers* and a middle aged woman with blond hair drinking coffee and chatting with customers. I don't mention it to my dad, though.

Then one weekend, it happens. A quiet lesson. I'm gone one weekend and my father checks the greenhouses at night. There is no one working late, and the storage area is quiet. All the orders are ready for

the following morning. Inside the cooler, he notices that the same fan with the loose screw from last November is loose again. But doctor's orders. He makes a note of it, and tells me about it the following afternoon.

"We don't have a 3/16 screwdriver," I tell him. He says there should be one in his woodshop.

That evening I walk into his woodshop for the first time in years. The wooden door cracks open. I look in, and feel threatened. With the bench against one wall, there is hardly any room to walk. The floor is covered with coiled hoses, cement blocks, old ice skates, rat traps, and broken tools. Cob webs hang in all corners.

Like usual, the bench is a mess covered with nails, hand tools, screws, rags filled with grease and oil, paint brushes, and receipts. All I need is a 3/16 screwdriver. I walk over and stand by the center of the bench. I lift an old sweater from the pile. I pull the trash basket beside myself and begin throwing away everything I won't need: old magazines, receipts, filthy rags, empty quarts of oil, rusty nails, even a handsaw orange with rust. Anything just to clear the area. I'll find it through elimination.

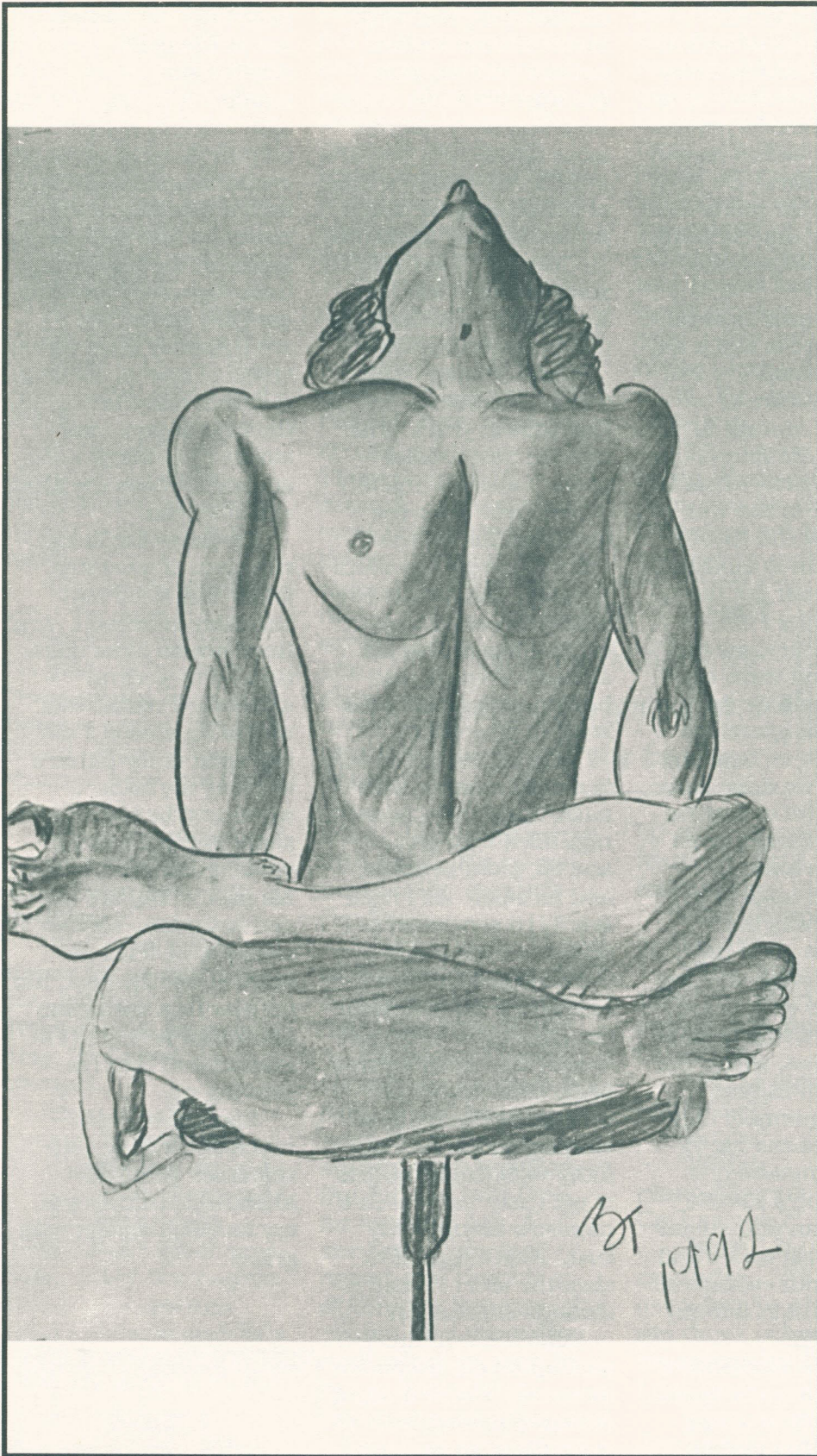
After a few minutes. I pick up an old telephone directory. Under it sits a standard screwdriver. In the relief of accomplishment I let out a yelp and throw the directory out of my hands. It rises in the air, peaks, and tips. Then spreading open, a

page falls out, obviously not in the book. It is smaller and folded in the middle. A liturgy of some sort. Its corners are folded over like dog ears and even though it's layered with a thin film of dirt, I notice its fine texture. It lands on the bench and from the words and flowers I see on its cover, I am suddenly filled with a vision of figures dressed in black, snow falling on the tops of grey tombstones, and words being spoken for both the living and the dead.

I pick up the liturgy, now sure of what my father had done that Saturday afternoon. And there are no more questions, only general answers. I realize that unless he shares it with me, what is my father's will stay my father's—whether it be his woodshop, his joys and sorrows, or the mysteries of his past. They are his and not mine. Maybe someday he'll tell me more about the past, but for now he's letting me know that he's glad I'm around and that I'm growing up.

I accept my ignorance and vanity with remorse. And the knowledge that sits in my hands, I accept with grace.

*Dirk Schouten, Senior
English
Fiction Category
First Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing
Contest*



Untitled by Beth Treick



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The Gallery

*P*ictured on these pages are the some



"Sacrifice" by Vanessa K. Bartels and Bruce Medema.

works created by students exploring the field of art. Far left is an untitled charcoal drawing by Beth Treick, a sophomore

English major.

At the bottom right is a lithograph entitled "Age to Age" by Bruce Medema, a senior art major.

To the near left is a lithograph entitled "Sacrifice" by Vanessa K. Bartels and Bruce Medema. Bartels is a junior art major.



"Age to Age" by Bruce Medema

*EX TENEBRAE,
LUMEN*

I.
Night falls
Upon me
And its fangs drive deep
Into my body.
I am helpless
As it feeds on me:
I sink under it
Breathless, in ripped agony
Twitching in pain,
I cry out . . .
A trembling scream
From the dark

II.
I see
The sky-ceiling of stars:
They are pieces
Of a shattered
Chandelier

Shards of hope —
Fragments of peace,
Drawn
Together
Undimly as the shed brilliance
Of Godfire —
Silver soothing Spirit flame
Lances through the blanket-black
The shimmer and glint
Of the scattered lights
Reminds me of
My own pale flicker
And I find this reflection
Cool balm for my pain.

The Darkness has been pierced.

*Brian Huseland, Freshman
English
Poetry Category
Second Place Winner
M. Seven Writing Contest*

To Carry

There is Love
A statement to shock
to scar, to awaken
the world.

Who will carry it?
Put it in their grocery sack,
take it to the bank,
keep it in their home,
drive with it. Who?

I will. Give it to me
I'll carry it.
Let it find flesh on my bones
I am not afraid.

Let love rain on me.
Let love cut me.
Let love nurse me.
Let me swim in the sea,
even drown in it.
Let love rule.
I will carry Love, or
Will love carry me?

*Brad Weidenaar, Junior
English*

Blackened

The dew of mourning
Drips, rolls in beads
Down the metal frame
Twisted in jagged shards.

We saw the buried needle
The interior light's glint
Off amber glass that pressed itself
To each of our lips.
The red glow of our faces
Looked bright to eyes of slits
And four grins grew wider.

A foot of lead
Paraded us through the still darkness
Until rubber straddled yellow
And blushes turned to white
As four round beams met
Dashed somersaulting skulls on
asphalt
And were snuffed.

We were children
Expecting someday not to be.
Hours ago, we breathed breath
Dreamed dreams
Sang and were sung to.

Think of us
As you pass the metal dust pile.
Think of us
When you hear the shrill murmur of
crickets
When you smell the first roses of
Spring
When you see your baby's first tiny steps
We are gone.
You are not.

Blackened.



artwork by Ben Meyer

*Tim Antonides, Senior
English*

Memories of a Century

With his bushy beard and old-fashioned top hat and tuxedo, my dad looked as if he'd be more comfortable holding the reins on a horse-drawn wagon than waving from the back seat of a polished Corvette Stingray convertible. But, comparing him to the other men I saw around town, I knew that my dad set a perfect example of a Midwestern man in 1884. And today, the first day of Sully's centennial — August 6, 1984 — setting an example was one of his primary duties as mayor.

The town had spent nearly all of the year before preparing for the centennial. For months, the families on my block had worked together on a huge float for the centennial parade. Modeled after a train from the 1880's, the float signified the founding of the town by Robert Sully, a railroad operator in 1884. More important than that, building the float was a cooperative effort that joined the eight families on my block, causing them to work collectively, much like families must have worked together 100 years before.

After the parade concluded each morning of the three-day centennial, people crowded the small town square, encircling the huge bell that, since Sully's establishment, had stood at the square's center, the town's own liberty bell, complete with a jagged crack down its side. Booths displayed antique furniture, canned fruits and preserves, and old-fashioned tools and machinery. Men wearing suspenders and derby hats and women in ankle-length dresses and bonnets roamed from booth to booth, recalling the times when such relics were the day's modern conveniences.

Since the centennial, I don't remember another time that I saw so many families united to work toward one project. The whole town seemed to smile continuously during the three days of the centennial, as if trying to recreate the past

could actually revive the simple pleasures people seemed to share in the "olden days" — homemade pies, horse-drawn carriages, church socials, plain cotton dresses, lace-trimmed bonnets, parasols, suspenders, and bow ties. The whole town was in such harmony that I could almost imagine the men out on the open prairie hauling beams for newly-established young farmer's barn-building and the women carrying gingham table cloths and picnic baskets overflowing with home-cooked foods for their husbands.

But when workmen removed the booths from the town square and

"... as if trying to recreate the past could actually revive the simple pleasures people seemed to share in the 'olden days'..."

the floats no longer paraded around the block, the celebration and the cooperation within the town seemed to trail along behind them. The sounds of the bustling crowds fell silent as the town resumed its normal life — a life 100 years different than the activities of the past three days. Only the remains of the festivities now littered the empty square. The train we had all worked so hard on now sat behind a shed on the edge of town, the crepe paper and streamers hanging sloppily, and the bright red paint of the caboose chipped and worn by the weather. A snapshot of us kids tossing candy from the windows of the train reminded us of the hours we had spent working together to perfect it.

But the closer I looked at the present-day Sully, the more I realized that life in Sully, 1984, was not so different from the small railroad town Robert Sully had established 100 years earlier. Even after the suspenders and bonnets were packed away, and candy bars and frozen pizzas replaced canned

peaches and homemade bread, many traditions that had begun so many years ago, though now changed with time, still remained. Neighbors still pitched in to help the farmer who had a rough year. Churches still held ice cream socials and hymn sings on steamy summer nights. Kids still played kick-the-can and sold lemonade from street corner stands. Sully still celebrated each Fourth of July with a day-long carnival, much like this year's centennial.

I realized then that maybe the centennial was more than a celebration of Robert Sully's achievements 100 years ago, more than a town's reminiscence of "the good ole' days." Sully was celebrating itself and its people, the products of 100 years of dedicated citizens.

Sully has already worked its way ten years closer to another centennial, and its residents are still celebrating. The town square, which once displayed remembrances of the past, is now lined with old-fashioned lampposts and antique wooden benches, constant reminders of the town's past. The small grocery market across the street still displays the owner's name in bold black letters. The townspeople still greet each other warmly when they meet in the town cafe and wave heartily at old friends and strangers alike. In the evening, when shops have closed and the small-town commotion has slowed for the nights, I can sit on a bench in the empty town square and almost hear Robert Sully's train whistling as it pounds down the tracks.

Tiffany Hoskins, Sophomore
English
Informal Essay Category
Second Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing Contest

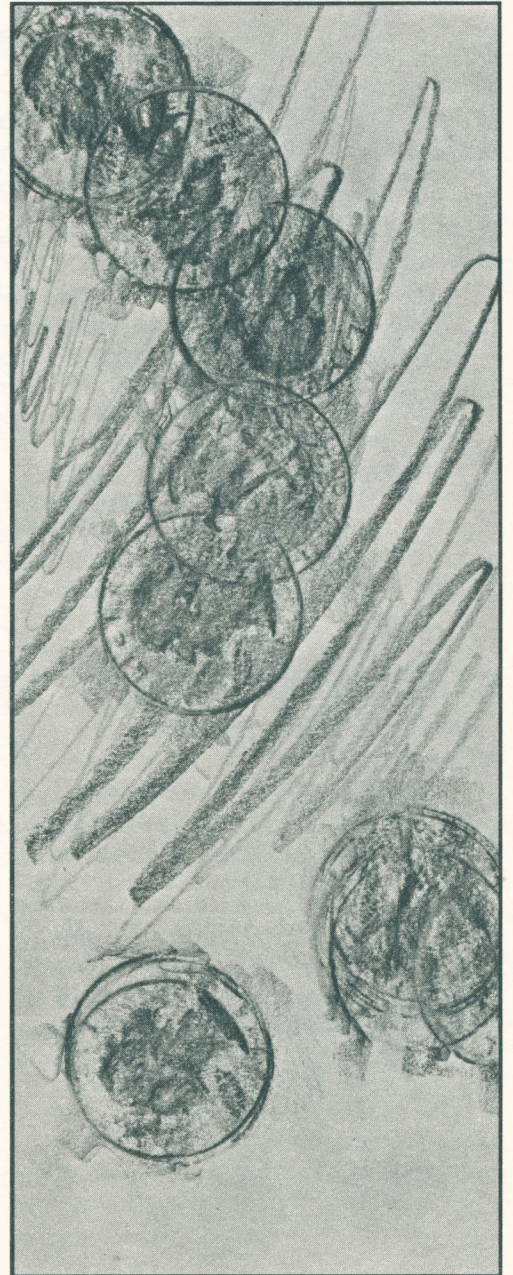
Upon Dropping a Quarter in Church

The pastor drones and mumbles
As he begins point two of a five point marathon
And I in my hard wooden bench stare
At the roof fans rotating
Making them change direction.

The offering quarter in my hand makes my palm sweat
And I put it down on the bench turning
To watch my older brother Douglas play with his two bit piece
Turning it over, switching it from hand to hand,
Balancing it on his thumb.
Suddenly, it slides off.
A nightmare second of silence, the clattering slap
Of its face on tile.
Then the rolling journey to the bench behind us.
Eighty stern faces turn on a synchronous swivel
As Douglas crawls on all fours under the pew
Bumping his head with a thud on the overhead bench.
Gripping the quarter, he crawls back on his seat.

My ears pound and throb
As a blush of fire creep up my cheeks
Enveloping my temples
And sending my entire face into a throbbing sea of red.
One titter from my brother's frozen throat
And I'm off
Spitting and sputtering
Shaking with uncontrolled snickers
Until a hairy hand surging with veins
Grips the muscles of my right thigh in an excruciating ball.
I stiffen in anguish.

My mother, more tolerant of the sins of youth,
Puts a finger to her lips
And pops a King peppermint into each of our palms.
My pounding head is soon relieved
As I suck on the grainy, icy mint
While Douglas passes his from hand to hand
Balancing it on his thumb.
Once again, I turn to observe him
And watch with pale horror
As a small white disc drops with a clatter to the floor.



artwork by Ben Meyer

*Tim Antonides, Senior
English
Poetry Category
First Place Tie-Winner
Martin Seven Writing Contest*

An

Evil,

Good

Thing

by Dirk Schouten

The winter I was in sixth grade my parents sentenced me to my bedroom for making fun of a mentally retarded girl while at the dinner table. Of course, before my banishment I had to make an attempt to defend myself. "Everybody calls her that. Everybody," was my vain-glorious plea. "Why do I have to get in trouble?"

I could've guessed my mother's reply. "Because YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN. That's why. Now go to your room . . . and I don't want to see you anymore, tonight."

I muttered something under my breath and, brooding, headed towards my bedroom.

I had been in the predicament many times before and the same feelings of bitterness swept over me. I wasn't even half way up the stairs and I was already scheming up a plan to get back at my mother.

Usually I didn't react this way. Sure, there is always the muttering and the brooding and lying on the bed while every noise from the dining room amplified its way through the living room ceiling. What would they be saying now? I would think. How would my brothers defend me? Would they even defend me? Sometimes my father's voice would rise and I'd cry at what he was saying. My anger would mix with self pity.

But scheming up a plan to get back was different. It was new. This time, I was angry enough to do an evil, good thing. It would be evil in a sense that I wasn't supposed to retaliate but good in a sense that I deserved revenge. This was the nature of my revenge, this evil, good thing.

I walked into my parents bedroom and fingered through my mother's bowl of jewelry. My fingers rolled over earrings, necklaces and rings until I found what I was looking for: my mother's gold bracelet. I pulled the bracelet out, walked into the bathroom. I locked the door, thought about my plan, and then put the bracelet in the perfect spot. For about an hour I felt justified, knowing that sooner or later my mother would find the gold piece missing. She would suffer and I would have my revenge.

And she did find her bracelet missing. And I did have my revenge. But like the saying goes, all good things — even evil, good things — come to an end. In less than two days, my fateful act transformed

our home into a frantic state of confusion. Things went sour in a hurry.

At first, my mother was confused and leery. Misplacing the piece was unlike her own character, and her intense search upstairs led to nothing. She became concerned and asked for our attention. "Please be on the look out for my gold arm-band," she said while we shuffled out the door one Sunday afternoon to play pond hockey, I, myself, in the front of the pack. "Maybe it's in one of your rooms," she said when we returned. Two days after it was missing, Mom gave us the official news that her gold wrist bracelet was gone and that a reward would be offered to whoever found it.

My brothers pulled their rooms apart to search for the bracelet. I argued that I had already thoroughly checked my room and therefore didn't need to rearrange the place. Mom walked two miles staring down on the asphalt, certain that she had dropped it while walking the dog. A day after it was missing, I found my younger brother upstairs holding a necklace to my dog's nose.

"What are you doing?" I said.

"I'm giving her the scent. You know, of Mom's jewelry. Esther's gonna help out. Maybe she'll find it," he said.

Later on, when I found my father searching

the garage, my conscience began to over-ride my vengeance. The fruit of victory was being squashed by the realization of what I had done.

But there was something else.

You see, I hadn't really hidden the bracelet. I threw it down the furnace vent. And to make things worse, the bracelet was not just a bracelet, but my father's wedding gift for my mother.

"Wedding gift?" I said when my brother told me.

"Oh yeah," he said, "Mom doesn't care about the gold bit and all. She's been mumbling about the words that were written on it."

I threw it down the furnace vent. The thought stayed with me and wouldn't leave. I remember pulling the lid off the vent and holding the priceless piece over the edge, certain that I had a right to drop it. For a few seconds I reconsidered doing it. I considered playing quiet for a week, allowing my mother to see the affect of sending her son to bed just for acting like any other twelve year old. She had to pay. She had to. So I dropped the bracelet.

Two days later, things had changed

"Because YOU
ARE A CHRISTIAN.
That's why. . . ."



artwork by Ben Meyer

once more. The search for the bracelet had been thorough, and it was over. Mom seemed to have accepted the loss and mentioned that it would probably just show up. Dad agreed while helping her on with her coat Sunday night, adding that no one in church would mind or even notice her other bracelet.

"But we're going out to dinner if we find it," she said as we walked towards the church.

The reward sounded appealing, but it wasn't long before my brothers were back to trading hockey cards and building a goalie's net in our barn. Dad returned to building an oak cabinet in the barn. Esther grew hungry watching the neighbor's cats play in their backyard.

Yet I knew all the answers and I began to feel incredible guilt. Watching my mother wilt like a lost

child told me that this single action hadn't really taught her a lesson. What it did was inadvertently change our roles as mother and son. She had lost her zest, her authoritarian clout. During those days, she acted so differently. She handled her grief quietly. And the real lunacy of it all was that she had no idea of what was really happening to her. What started out as a rash reaction was going to far, and the more she talked about the intricacies of the bracelet's worth and how sorry she was for losing it, the more I saw that I had given myself, a role I didn't want and couldn't handle. In throwing the bracelet away, I was holding onto her emotions like reins, and I felt guilty with the power I owned. But even worse than the guilt was the isolation of the sin. I had done the deed by myself. And I was alone.

Of course, the only way to resolve the conflict was to find the bracelet again. One evening after supper, I pulled the steel duct away from the vent and reached down the furnace. I knew there was a chance that the bracelet had not fallen the entire way down. From the same trick I had played on a brother a few years before, I remembered how his pack of hockey cards had landed on a platform only three feet down the shoot. Reaching down, my body flat on the bathroom floor, I knew the do-or-die situation I was in. Find the key, and all would be fine. A straight face and a good lie about the bracelet being behind the toilet would be the icing. But to reach down only to find a dusty platform, would mean that I would pay in more ways than I could imagine. Financially, I thought, and I pulled myself closer to the duct. Socially as well, since my family would no longer trust me. Just before I could think of other horrid side-effects, my fingers reached the platform. And the bracelet.

If I had told my parents the truth, this would have been the story about a young hero, and honest boy who admits to his sins, and grows closer to manhood through the whole ordeal. The old Innocence to Experience bit.

But it can't be.

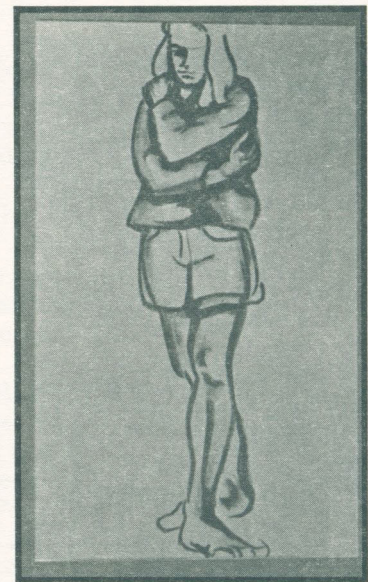
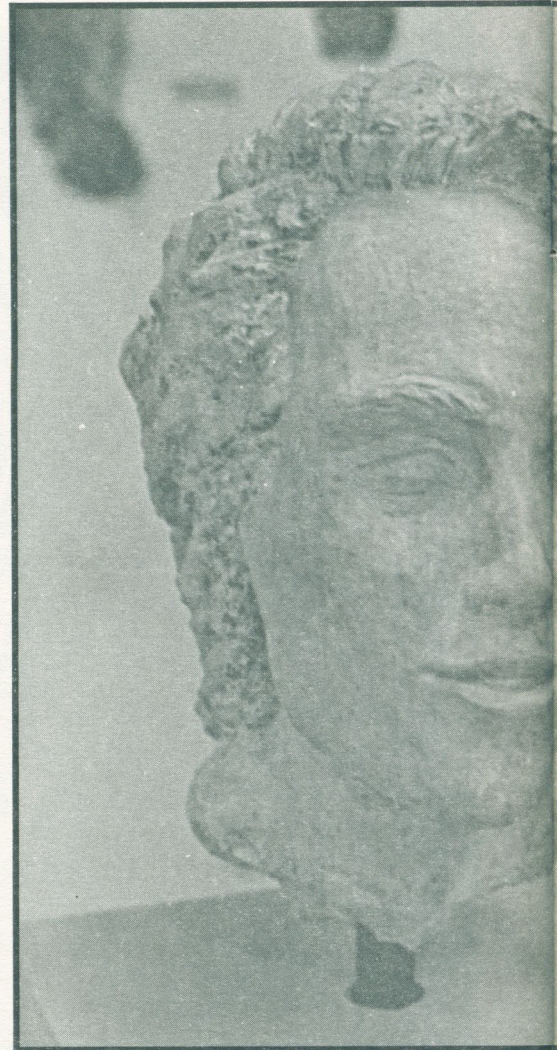
You see, I kept my mouth shut. Sure, the secret was on my mind when I dressed in my Sunday best and went with the family to Dino's Pizzeria the next evening, but I couldn't have cared less. Seeing Mom with her bracelet again and knowing I was back to being just the son was good enough for me. My family went out to supper that night to celebrate a lie, and I went to celebrate a return to normal life.

I ordered a huge plate of spaghetti. Meatballs and everything.

Dirk Schouten, Senior
English
Informal Essay Category
First Place Winner
Martin Seven Writing Contest



Left: "Hostage," charcoal drawing by Irene Van
Below: "Portrait Study," hydrostone sculpture by



"Hide in Your Shell," charcoal drawing by Irene Vanderkruk.

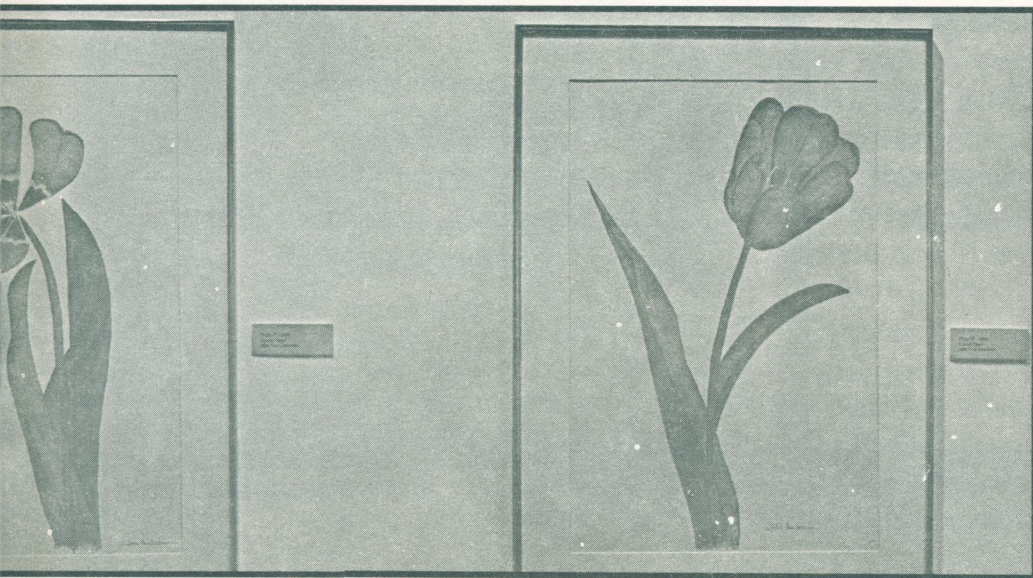
erkruk.
Bruce Medema.



Hailed for its focus on the arts, the Dordt Art Gallery has featured many talented artists. Among these talented artists are some of Dordt's own student artists. Featured on these pages are some of the works from the seniors' art shows. The works range from charcoal drawings to hydros-tone sculpture.

Senior Shows

The artists featured here are Irene Vanderkruk, and Bruce Medema and Julie Van Leeuwen.



"Tulip I and II," colored pencil by Julie Van Leeuwen.

T o R o s a l y n

*As her
namesake,
She was contained beauty
In the rough
With her thorns.*

*She died before her time
Clipped by one man's selfish
Desire. Pride. Nauseating disregard.*

*Yet unlike the rose
She did not drink gentle rains
On warm spring mornings.*

*But fiery hailstorms.
Hate. Shame. Injured dignity.*

*She was the portrait of the burning ache of hate
And revenge.
Accidentally accomplished
By death.*

*Rosalyn no longer grows.
She is dead.
Oh, how harsh is the sudden absence of potential,
The destruction of an image in progression.*

*She is dead.
We are living.*

*Rosalyn, what can we learn from your interrupted life?
How does your blood cry out from the ground?*

*Learn to love.
Nothing speeds or numbers our days as hate.
Love lengthens life.*

*Understand the fighters.
They do not fight without cause.
Brighten others,
Value Today,
Fight the darkness of hate . . .*

*Rosalyn, your life was a bloody battle
Against your family,
Against your society,
Against your peers,
Against yourself.*

*Yet now you are victorious.
Your purple bruises
Are now a purple heart
As you sleep soundly in the arms of Jesus.
Rest easy, Rosalyn.
The battle is over.*

*Shelbi Anderson, Freshman
Art*

Roast and Potatoes

I speak knowledgeably
of roast and potato traditions
in dust-free cluttered houses
decorated with pictures of
windmills and the Rhine,
of discipline and honesty
in stoically-tight faces
which stream tears while singing
Ere zij God,
of Sinterklaas and Zwarte Pete
in family-close circles
rippling with loud laughter and
first-hand stories of the war,
of large frames and blue eyes
with 'dis and 'dat accents
confiding in the first generation
of the old country
and heritage.

Chrissy Struyk, Senior
English

Reflections of Me

"What do you see?"
"Nothing."
That is the nature of the mirror.
"What do you see?"
"Beauty and Grace
enfleshed in me!"
That is the nature of the mirror.
"What do you see?"
"Christ."
Now, we are close to reality.

Brad Weidenaar, Junior
English

Puella non Bella (the unbeautiful girl)

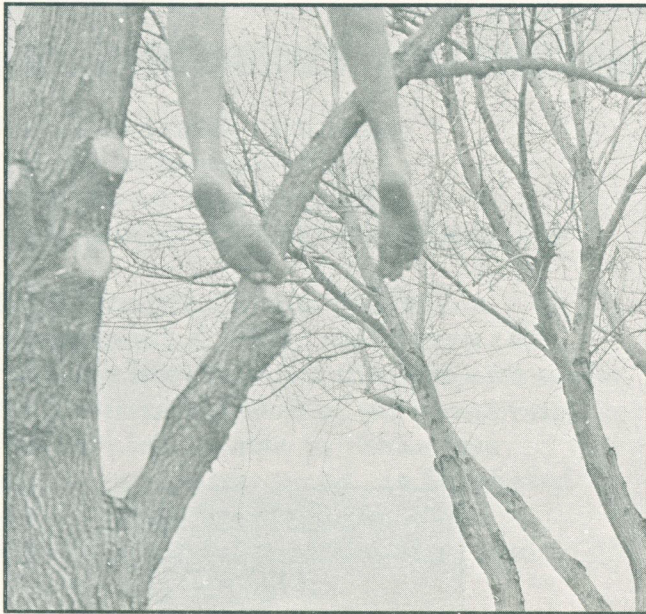


photo by Christine van Belle

As I was dancing in the glade
I hopped upon a loathesome maid
Who hung there, swinging, from the trees,
With scrawny toes and knobby knees.
I, gasping, sank into the ground.
My mouth was dry; I made no sound
As I went down, I saw a rope.
There it was, a source of hope
And yet the maid was hanging there
With flapping ears and slimy hair.
I reached the rope with one great lunge
And hung there damply like a sponge.
I grabbed a nearby maple tree
And, in horror, tried to flee.
I fled that place with screaming strides
I clutched my painfully aching sides.
There I never went again
I wished that I had never been,
Down in the woods, and seen that glade,
Where hung that horrid, loathesome maid.

Sam Gesch and John Van Dyk, Seniors
English/Spanish and Biology

Gethsemane Love

Father, I do not wish to Love
please hear my prayer
Love hurts, Love humbles, Love weeps
of these I have had enough
Do not turn your face from my plea
The sound of a Loved one crying in the garden
The voice but and echo of mine
"Take this Love from me"
The hoarse voice trembled
Love oozed from his pores
Salty, bloody, hot
Yet His Love was not gone
Love was torn from his back
Deep, bloody, raw
Yet His Love was not gone
Why did you not answer his plea?
Why did you not listn to his cry?
Why did you turn your face?
I ask, my hands filled
one with flesh, one with blood
Neither Depth nor salt do I taste,
Cold thin frustration drench the bread
Warm salty tears splash the blood
Deep raw pain of Love tears deep into self
breaking the flesh
My parched lips now moist with sweaty wine
My stomach now satisfied with broken bread
I taste now why you could not answer
Yes, the call from the garden you heard
That wish could never be met
How can you take away Love
When Love is what you are
the Word in the garden was you
O Father, Forgive my request
as I see more clearly now
The flesh and blood that claim me
have made me one with Him
Since Love is what you are
Then I should be like you
So let me hurt from loving
and let me cry from loving
And most of all
Let me know, my love can never leave
For I AM Love through you

*Ethan Brue, Senior
Engineering
Poetry Category
Honorable Mention
Martin Sever Writing Contest*

Faith?

There is a feeling, when I'm alone
that pervades my soul
I think it is myself.
I've seen darkness.
It pens itself in name:
Sartre, Ionesco, and Pirandello,
Back to Ibsen and Strindberg.
And yet it is not myself
It is part; it is of me,
but distorted.
Where are you light,
Love strength, hope,
Good?
One-eyed looks, I've received
from inhabitants of this town.
I surround myself in friends
and lipsakes
offering hands, minds, bodies.
The light is clear, sometimes
at others it is fractured.
With prised glasses I see.
My lips yet say
Faith?

Brad Weidenaar, junior
English

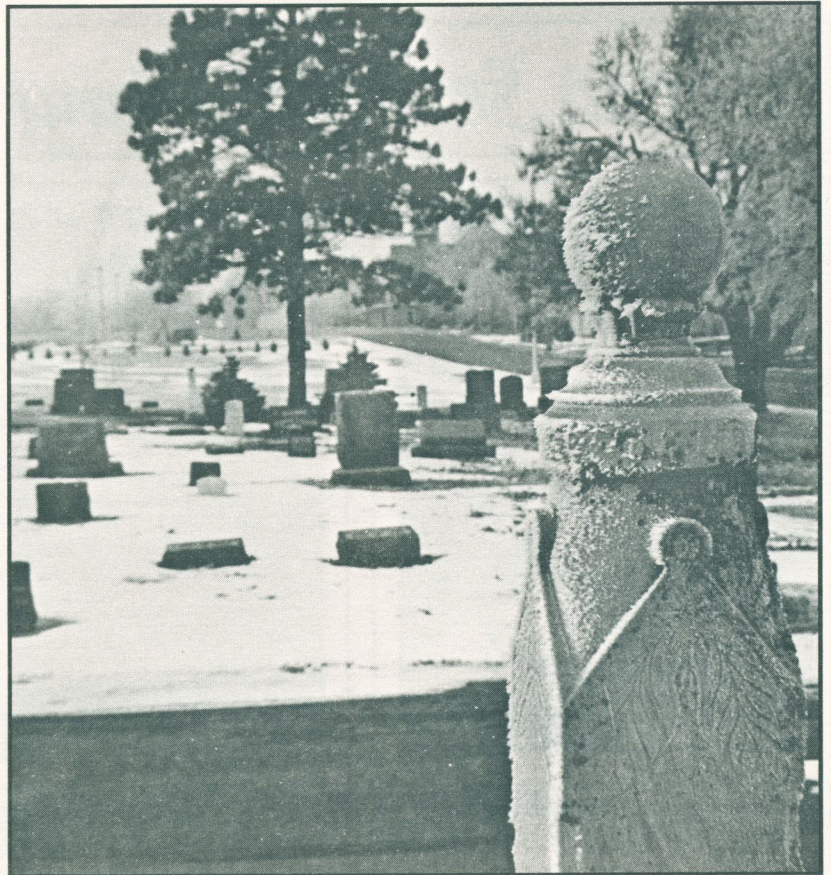


photo by Bruce Medema

Tasting Winter

A sudden breath of winter
in the autumnal sky
whitened in mid-October,
before winter's blanket and December.

Large, graceful flakes that bless
the eye lash; A white and furry cap
upon our heads, from the simplest walk,
one acquires the look of an inanimate
object which unable to shake free,
except some latter wind, is blanketed
by the Patron Saint of Whiteness
with a cozy, woolen blanket of and
for winter.

It is only taste. Autumn
fights with winter
to be heard the longer
The ground, still dancing with the
Indian summer, accepts
winter's gift but spends it.
Winter's blanket is thrown off
in hasty rising
to meet the demands of the day.
Autumn, the victor goes on.
Not for long, soon Jack will visit
making the frozen accept.
And this taste of wine
that merries the tongue
Will be a bottle to merry the soul.

Brad Weidenaar, Junior
English

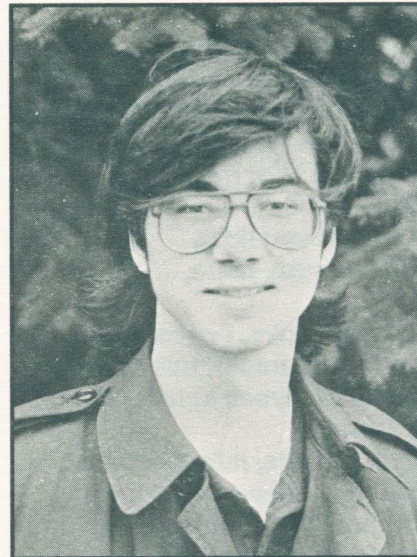
Martin Seven Writing Contest Winners



Tim Antonides
First Place, Poetry
Second Place, Academic Essay



Tiffany Hoskins
First Place, Freshman Essay
Second Place, Informal Essay



Brian Huseland
Second Place, Poetry



Dirk Schouten
First Place, Fiction
First Place, Informal Essay



Christine van Belle
Second Place, Fiction



Sara Vanden Bosch
Second Place, Freshman Essay

Not Pictured: Alida Van Dijk
First Place, Academic Essay

